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CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method of access control, comprising:  
for content accessed by any communications protocol  
supported within a system, checking for a content label  
identifying a content category for the content;  
determining from the content label whether the content  
is restricted; and  
responsive to determining from the content label that  
the content is restricted, prompting a user for a password  
required to access the content.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of checking  
content accessed by any communications protocol supported  
within a system for a content label identifying a content  
category for the content further comprises:  
checking a content label within the content.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of checking  
content accessed by any communications protocol supported  
within a system for a content label identifying a content  
category for the content further comprises:  
checking a content label within a header for a  
communications transaction transmitting the content.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of checking  
content accessed by any communications protocol supported  
within a system for a content label identifying a content  
category for the content further comprises:  
checking a label bureau for a content label associated  
with a uniform resource locator, filename, or datastream



AUS000072US1

1 6. A method of establishing access control, comprising:  
2 obtaining content label categories and associated user  
3 restrictions for desired access control;  
4 distributing the content label categories and  
5 associated user restrictions to each of a plurality of  
6 communications programs within a system, wherein at least  
7 two of the communications programs employ different  
8 communications protocols; and  
9 setting access controls for each communications program  
10 within the system utilizing the content label categories and  
11 associated user restrictions.

12 7. The method of claim 6, further comprising:  
13 during installation of a communications program  
14 subsequent to setting access controls for each  
15 communications program within the system utilizing the  
16 content label categories and associated user restrictions,  
17 checking for existing access control settings for other  
18 communications programs and setting access controls for the  
19 communications program being installed utilizing the  
20 existing access control settings.

1 8. A system for access control, comprising:  
2 means for checking content accessed by any  
3 communications protocol supported within a system for a  
4 content label identifying a content category for the  
5 content;  
6 means for determining from the content label whether  
7 the content is restricted; and  
8 means, responsive to determining from the content label  
9 that the content is restricted, for prompting a user for a  
10 password required to access the content.

1 9. The system of claim 8, wherein the means for checking  
2 content accessed by any communications protocol supported  
3 within a system for a content label identifying a content  
4 category for the content further comprises:

5 means for checking a content label within the content.

1 10. The system of claim 8, wherein the means for checking  
2 content accessed by any communications protocol supported  
3 within a system for a content label identifying a content  
4 category for the content further comprises:

5 means for checking a content label within a header for  
6 a communications transaction transmitting the content.

1 11. The system of claim 8, wherein the means for checking  
2 content accessed by any communications protocol supported  
3 within a system for a content label identifying a content  
4 category for the content further comprises:

5 means for checking a label bureau for a content label  
6 associated with a uniform resource locator or filename for  
7 the content.

1 12. The system of claim 8, wherein the means for  
2 determining from the content label whether the content is  
3 restricted further comprises:

4 means for determining one or more content categories  
5 from the content label; and

6 means for determining whether any content category  
7 identified within the content label is restricted for the  
8 user.

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1 13. A system for establishing access control, comprising:  
2 means for obtaining content label categories and  
3 associated user restrictions for desired access control;  
4 means for distributing the content label categories and  
5 associated user restrictions to each of a plurality of  
6 communications programs within a system, wherein at least  
7 two of the communications programs employ different  
8 communications protocols; and  
9 means for setting access controls for each  
10 communications program within the system utilizing the  
11 content label categories and associated user restrictions.

12 14. The system of claim 13, further comprising:  
13 means operable during installation of a communications  
14 program subsequent to setting access controls for each  
15 communications program within the system utilizing the  
16 content label categories and associated user restrictions  
17 for checking for existing access control settings for other  
18 communications programs and for setting access controls for  
19 the communications program being installed utilizing the  
20 existing access control settings.

AUS000072US1

1 15. A computer program product within a computer usable  
2 medium for access control, comprising:

3 instructions for checking content accessed by any  
4 communications protocol supported within a system for a  
5 content label identifying a content category for the  
6 content;

7 instructions for determining from the content label  
8 whether the content is restricted; and

9 instructions, responsive to determining from the  
10 content label that the content is restricted, for prompting  
11 a user for a password required to access the content.

12 16. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the  
13 instructions for checking content accessed by any  
14 communications protocol supported within a system for a  
15 content label identifying a content category for the content  
16 further comprises:

17 instructions for checking a content label within the  
18 content.

19 17. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the  
20 instructions for checking content accessed by any  
21 communications protocol supported within a system for a  
22 content label identifying a content category for the content  
23 further comprises:

24 instructions for checking a content label within a  
25 header for a communications transaction transmitting the  
26 content.

27 18. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the  
28 instructions for checking content accessed by any  
29 communications protocol supported within a system for a

AUS000072US1

4 content label identifying a content category for the content  
5 further comprises:

6 instructions for checking a label bureau for a content  
7 label associated with a uniform resource locator or filename  
8 for the content.

1 19. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein the  
2 instructions for determining from the content label whether  
3 the content is restricted further comprises:

4 instructions for determining one or more content  
5 categories from the content label; and

6 instructions for determining whether any content  
7 category identified within the content label is restricted  
8 for the user.



1 20. A computer program product within a computer usable  
2 medium for establishing access control, comprising:  
3 instructions for obtaining content label categories and  
4 associated user restrictions for desired access control;  
5 instructions for distributing the content label  
6 categories and associated user restrictions to each of a  
7 plurality of communications programs within a system,  
8 wherein at least two of the communications programs employ  
9 different communications protocols; and  
10 instructions for setting access controls for each  
11 communications program within the system utilizing the  
12 content label categories and associated user restrictions.

13 21. The computer program product of claim 20, further  
14 comprising:

15 instructions executed during installation of a  
16 communications program subsequent to setting access controls  
17 for each communications program within the system utilizing  
18 the content label categories and associated user  
19 restrictions for checking for existing access control  
20 settings for other communications programs and for setting  
access controls for the communications program being  
installed utilizing the existing access control settings.